

Cray era: 1976–1989

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160-megaflop Cray-1 revolutionizes supercomputing performance

Seymour Cray, the CDC designer who led the development teams that produced the 6600 and 7600, left CDC to start his own company in 1972.

Cray Research completed its first design, the revolutionary 160-megaflop Cray-1, in 1975 and delivered it to Los Alamos the following year.

The Cray-1 used integrated circuits and an innovative Freon cooling system to ensure the giant machines did not overheat.

Cray also used revolutionary “vector” processing that enabled the Cray-1 to process information far more efficiently than any other computer of its day.

During the 1980s, the Laboratory purchased additional Cray computers, most notably the X-MP. The X-MP, which used multiple “vector” processors, reigned as the world’s fastest computer from 1982 to 1985.

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